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STILL SHIRKING INVESTIGATION.

THE ART AMATEUR has a supplement devoted to the war on the Cypriote statues, and the management of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is a pity that this agreeable periodical should have been led into a crusade, which they might know would not end to the disadvantage of the Museum.—*New York Observer*.

WE do not want it to "end to the disadvantage of the Museum." Truth and justice are all we are fighting for, and the triumph of these, we believe, so far from being to the disadvantage of the Museum would have the effect of purifying its management and securing for it a career of usefulness. The solicitude of the trustees is for themselves, not for the Museum; and by their evident determination to shield their accused Director at all hazards they put themselves on trial with him. The time has passed for mincing words. It is as well to use plain language. Moral cowardice, then, is what prevents these gentlemen of position, wealth, and character from putting an end to this disgraceful scandal by insisting that the truth shall be told at all hazards. Some of them, who at first were honestly in doubt, can be so no longer, and we say distinctly that the President of the Museum himself has only to remove the seal of secrecy from the lips of an eminent gentleman—whom recently he tentatively consulted as to the justice of Mr. Feuardent's charges, but whose opinion now he does not consider it expedient to publish—to satisfy the public that it is impossible for the defence of General Di Cesnola to stand one hour before the light of a full and fair investigation.

The policy of the Director and his friends has been to destroy the accuser by wearying him out. The charges have never been honestly met. Silence on the part of the accused has generally followed each new batch of specifications, and it is only when goaded at last into making some show of meeting the demands for an investigation that the trustees put out on the floor of the Museum two of the suspected statues and invited "anybody" to come forward and examine them. To invite *anybody*, in this case, is equivalent to inviting nobody. Mr. Feuardent argues very justly that to be properly tested, these statues—the joins of whose "unrelated parts" are fraudulently concealed by cement as hard as the original stone itself—must be subjected to certain tests requiring among other things the use of heat, and a chemical bath, all of which should be done only in the presence of an authorized committee who could officially report on the result of the examination of these and other suspected statues, so that their finding may settle the matter once and for all. He is ready to name his representatives on such a committee, and asks the Museum authorities to name theirs. But it seems they dare not subject the honesty of their Director to such a test. It is considered safer for the latter to take artists and sculptors privately to the Museum and, while pretending to give them facilities for investigation, actually to steer them from the facts, just as Mr. Prime steered that wonderfully good-natured investigating committee of his. From personal observation we may remark that it is easy for an intelligent person, making the tour of the cases containing these Cypriote antiquities, to be misled until given the key to the frauds committed, and then it is all clear enough. The tricks resorted to in order to deceive are almost incredible. In several instances, for example, false lines are made on the statuary to indicate joins which do not exist, the aim evidently being to distract attention from the real points of juncture, which are carefully concealed by means of colored cement now incorporated with the original stone. In a fair investigation, of course, all this would be made manifest, and the testimony of at least half a dozen reputable witnesses employed in the Museum would explain just how, when, and by whom much of this ingenious patchwork was done. The worthlessness of this collection, for which the public has paid General Di Cesnola \$140,000, would be established, it is true, and the greater part of it probably would be rejected. But this would not result to "the disadvantage of the Museum," as The New York Observer seems to imagine, although we do not doubt that it would result somewhat to the personal disadvantage of General Di Cesnola, and of Mr. Prime and those of his associates who, to save themselves from the unpleasant consequences of the truth, are willing to cover the tarnished reputation of the worthy Director with the cloak of their own respectability.

We ask again why, if there is nothing to fear from an official investigation, do not the Museum authorities

without more ado grant Mr. Feuardent the opportunity he asks for? If he fails to prove his charges let him be branded as a slanderer and a libeller. For our own part, we would not hesitate to join in his condemnation. But until he can be so convicted, fair-minded persons we think will agree with us that, as an accomplished scholar and a gentleman of stainless reputation, he should not be discredited until he has a fair opportunity of proving his charges in his own way.

THE AMERICAN ARTISTS' EXHIBITION.

IF few of the pictures in this exhibition are so striking as to stand out unchallenged from all the rest in excellence of invention or in pictorial qualities, it must be admitted that there is a high degree of general merit. While some are better than others, all are worth looking at; and the best praise we can give the exhibition as a whole is, that the pictures have the air and make the distinct impression of having been painted by men who love their art for its own sake. Portrait-painting, which has made a clear advance in this country since Mr. Duveneck, Mr. Wm. M. Chase, Mr. Alden Weir, and Mr. Abbot H. Thayer began to paint, scores a new triumph in Mr. Wyatt Eaton's two portraits of this year.

Mr. Eaton has worked so quietly and been so little talked about, nay, in some cases his work has so disappointed those whose hopes had been excited by his first exhibited picture, that these two portraits are an inevitable surprise; an unreasonable surprise we grant, because the artist who drew the crayon head of the late Dr. Holland, and who painted the portrait of Miss Reid last year, was obviously capable of much; but for all that, the pictures in the present exhibition show an advance beyond all that could have been fairly prophesied. It is not alone the painting, in the portrait on the west wall, so harmonious in its sombre glow; nor the drawing, which completely satisfies without in the least obtruding itself as drawing—we simply feel that the woman is there, we cannot trace the process that brought her there;—there is beyond all this and permeating this, a sense of repose, of reality, of being, such as we do not remember to have met in any modern portrait. This picture, invaluable as it, no doubt, is felt to be now by its fortunate owner, will some day be a possession for the State; we are sure we do not exaggerate when we say that in the gallery that shall hold it in the future many a youth will be fired to emulation by its noble beauty.

Mr. Thayer's "Portrait of a Lady with a Horse" is likewise important, but must be taken in instalments, as it does not charm by its unity. People are right to be divided about it, for it is divided about itself. Some days we look longest at the horse and please ourselves with remembering Mr. Thayer's first venture—the first for our eyes, we mean—when he painted the ferry-boat crowded with its horses, and showed with all his early crudeness, his determination toward reality and the use of his own eye. Then another day the sun will rest with such affectionate warmth round the lady's head with its aureole of rich gold we must look at her alone; but, in spite of gold hair and ivory throat, the roving eyes will back again to the horse as the more intimately painted of the two, and so, between one and the other, the picture as a picture never gets itself fairly dealt with. And then, all the rest of the canvas is wasted; even the hand, that might have been an oasis in this desert of paint, turns out a mirage.

Mr. Weir follows a fashion with his lady in white wreathing white roses into a garland against a white wall. Last year Mr. Chase painted his queer "Woman in White," who looked like Mr. Oscar Wilde's grandmother in her teens, and here is Mr. Maynard with his "Inventor," in summer duck—all of them experiments in Mr. Whistler's original vein—but all of them missing the warmth and the unity of his "White Girl," albeit these artists can put more life into their models than he did into his lay-figure. There is always some good painting in a picture sent out by Mr. Weir—he is a painter by instinct—and often there is a great deal of poor painting. So there is good painting in this "Flora de nos jours," as we like to call it; the dexterity is considerable with which the whites are discriminated, but as a composition the artist has it not well in hand; it must confess to spottiness, and the figure is inanimate. Both as painting and as a picture we much prefer Mr. Weir's "Memories," No. 122; it cannot escape us how independent of convention the artist is,

how simple and direct in his method—his figures never have the look of being painted from a model.

Mr. Duveneck does not hold his own in his portraits here. The "Portrait of a Lady," in the corner, is woefully hard in the painting and most wooden in the attitude; compare the stiffness of her left arm and hand with the same arm and hand in Mr. Eaton's portrait—how lightly this latter lies, how softly rounded, how life flows down it to the tips of the finely shaped fingers! Mr. Duveneck's work is obtrusively painty, and he fails in his duty to both his subjects in not attracting us to them by their expression. If we have made a mistake in asking the life-size lady for a subscription to our pet charity, she need not refuse us so unforgivingly, and if we have made the mistake of taking the other lady for our long-lost cousin, it is cruel in her to freeze us so with her utter ignorance of our previous existence. No women could be so irreconcilable as Mr. Duveneck makes these two look. Mr. Frederick P. Vinton's "Portrait," No. 115, is more commonplace than we are used to find him. Both here and in the Academy—where he has an excellent likeness of Wendell Phillips—he seems reconciled to take the regulation studio view of his subject. He began more hopefully, playing the novel rôle of hunting down in his subject all his or her native homeliness, and putting it on his canvas without flinching, so that we thought here is an avatar of Swift in the body of a decorous Bostonian; but whether he found the world obdurate or not he seems now in a more complying mood. If this year Mr. Vinton is a trifle disappointing, on the other hand Mr. T. W. Dewing gives us a pleasant surprise in his two portraits, where—always excepting the unpleasant slip up in the color of the gentleman's face—there is as much life and vivacity with the cleverest off-hand execution as we have seen this long while, and much beside too in this panel the size of one's hand. But in the same artist's "Portrait," No. 28, we return to the Mr. Dewing who so often disappoints us that perhaps we may be accused of finding more in the little picture we have just praised than there really is. But that, we know, is good, and we also sadly know that this "Portrait of a Lady," is not.

Mrs. Whitman is perhaps in danger of becoming a mannerist in her way of painting, but so long as she keeps her fresh way of looking at children, and her power of making us believe them alive and loving, she may be a mannerist if she will. Her way of painting is large and free, her drawing is certain and she can plant these youngsters on their feet, no matter how lightly. Neither her picture here of a little girl with dandelions, nor her equally good picture in the Academy, is as telling nor as taking as her group of three children in a late exhibition at Philadelphia. That was indeed a picture to remember; but we are very glad to get whatever this lady will send us, her little girl on the north wall, or her vigorous "Rhododendrons."

Mr. George Fuller puts so much of his own refinement into his pictures that they cannot miss of that charm at least, but we confess we begin to be weary of this monotony of mist. This seems to us in danger of becoming a mannerism of the worst kind because it is a mannerism of thinking more even than the mannerism of execution it appears to be. The "Priscilla" of the misty Blithedale romance of our great novelist may perhaps be rightly seen through a mist, but all the people of Mr. Fuller's late acquaintance are seen now through the same medium, from Winfred Dysart down to this queerly named "Lorette." And this is so unreasonable that we lose the power of looking at each figure separately and studying it for itself, and mix them all up together in our mind as the children of whim. The same monotony extends to the faces; there is a uniform prettiness in them, but it is a kitten-like prettiness, in which character and individuality disappear, so that Winfred Dysart and Priscilla Fauntleroy are to all intents and purposes one and the same person. We cannot help thinking that much of the talk about Mr. Fuller's "poetic feeling" comes from people who think that poetry cannot be poetry if it be clear and defined, but to deserve the name must be obscure, mystical, and the thought in it like the song of "a lark hid in a cloud." Now there is just as much poetry in Mr. Eaton's "Portrait" or in Mr. Warner's "Nymph and Cupid" as there is in Mr. Fuller's picture here, or in Mr. Whistler's "The Artist's Mother," or in Mr. Thayer's "Lady and Horse," or in Mr. C. W. Grant's parody of Mr. Fuller. Mr. Fuller's gracefulness, his refinement, his sentiment, could all be as

well expressed by a clear and accomplished method of painting as they are by this uncertainty and concealment. Once or twice such a vaporous way of dealing with facts might be justified by the subject, but a "Fuller" would not be a "Fuller" now if the spectator could make it out.

Mr. Niemeyer, whom we found so trivial at the Academy, is more serious here, but we think his time wasted in painting and ours in contemplating the not very handsome back of his "Corinna," No. 73, or the washed-out "Apple Orchard," No. 75. Much the best of all Mr. Niemeyer's work, taking both the exhibitions together, is his "At the Window," here, No. 74. The left half of the canvas is rather bare, but the figure of the young schoolmistress seated at the open window after school is dismissed shows a sentiment and a degree of skill in painting that we rather wonder at, seeing how little of either quality there is in the other work contributed by this artist.

Mr. Douglas Volk, snared by his success of last year, has gone into a speculation in snow, and really seems to have made a corner in that unsubstantial commodity. The "Just one Year ago To-day" of the Academy is as bad painting as it is false sentiment, but the "Captives," here, is merely bad painting without any sentiment at all, merely two people posing before a hole in a white sheet. Did Mr. Volk ever make any studies from real snow? Believe us, merely squeezing tubes of white paint over canvas is not the way to enter into "the treasures of the snow," nor to open the door to others. Mr. Lungren's queer Parisians dancing in a park by electric light is a new freak. Could not this artist apply his talent for once to painting something that is not queer? Life, to Mr. Lungren, seems to be a poem divided up like an old ballad into "Fyttes." Mr. W. H. Low, too, is off for a dance; at least we can admit that he has given us the symbol for dancing, though, like Mr. Alma Tadema and many another modern, he cannot hope to convey the idea of dancing by merely balancing folks on one toe. Mr. Blashfield tries a doubtful experiment with his statue of Autumn, colored like life, trying to warm herself over the ashes of Summer in a marble niche, but the figure is well drawn. Mr. Blashfield is well equipped for painting a good picture when he shall find a reasonable subject.

Mr. J. G. Brown's "At the Cottage Door" and Mr. W. T. Smedley's "The Weekly Mail" are excellent pieces of genre painting. The painting of the girl's apron in Mr. Smedley's picture is always pleasant to come upon. In the foreground rug it is the painting that is faded and not the rug itself, a distinction with a difference; the window does not show us out-of-doors, but only a painted shade; yet more shortcomings might be forgiven in this well-painted picture, in view of the facial expression so well seized. What a superiority in this work over the same artist's "That City Chap," in the late Water Color Exhibition!

The sculpture deserves a word if it were only for Mr. Olin L. Warner's graceful "Nymph and Cupid," or Mr. Augustus St. Gaudens' bronze bas-relief of his own chubby little boy, or the "Young Pan" of Mr. Louis St. Gaudens, a spirited figure in attitude and well poised, but rather loosely modelled.

them his ill-gotten gains and reimbursed the purchaser who had been imposed upon." The picture sold was an adaptation of Mr. De Haas's picture in the present Academy exhibition, "A Breezy Day—Mouth of the Tyne, England." The artist mercifully withholds the cheat's name from publication; so I will not give it.

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It is an open secret, however, that the culprit is a young artist of the Tenth Street Studio Building, who, with a confederate in this disgraceful business, was expelled by the landlord when the facts were brought to his knowledge. This precious pair of scamps—both of whom exhibit at the Academy, by the way—were also concerned in the forgery of two alleged examples of Albert Bierstadt and A. T. Bricher, which were taken down from the auction-room walls of Messrs. Barker & Co. at the same time as the alleged De Haas. It is very kind of Mr. De Haas to absolve this firm from blame so far as the fraud on him is concerned; but, to say the least, picture dealers with so little knowledge as to allow three distinct forgeries to be imposed upon them in one sale are hardly safe people for the public to transact business with.

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MR. DE HAAS'S experience calls to mind some notable cases in which artists have suffered from cunning and unscrupulous imitators. The venerable Thomas Sidney Cooper, R. A., declared once in court that out of one hundred and fifty-three pictures submitted to him for inspection, all ostensibly by his hand, only eleven were genuine. The number of manufactured Birket Fosters and John Linnells in existence may doubtless be reckoned by hundreds.

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THE skill of the picture copyist is sometimes almost incredible. Two paintings were once offered for sale within a few days of each other at Christie's. One was an original by Sir Edwin Landseer and the other a copy of the same. The day before the copy was to be sold, Landseer happened to stroll through the gallery, saw it, and mistook it for his original work! A copyist employed by Ruskin succeeded in reproducing the works of Turner with such fidelity that Ruskin was obliged to sign them with his own name to prevent their being sold as real Turners.

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THE following lines by Longfellow, in his "Keramos," in praise of the wondrous pottery of Japan, are brought to mind by the poet's death:

"All the bright flowers that fill the land,
Ripples of waves on rock or sand,
The snow on Fusi-yama's cone,
The midnight heaven so thickly sown
With constellations of bright stars,
The leaves that rustle, the reeds that make
A whisper by each stream and lake,
The saffron dawn, the sunset red,
Are painted on these lovely jars;
Again the sky-lark sings, again
The stork, the heron, and the crane
Float through the azure overhead,
The counterfeit and counterpart
Of Nature reproduced in Art."

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THE sale of the John Wolfe collection of paintings at Chickering Hall showed no fall in the prevailing high prices which rule the market for foreign pictures in this country. The ninety-five works brought \$131,945, which must pay a very handsome advance on the original investment by the owner. Bouguereau's finely painted "Nymphs and Satyr," the last picture sold, brought the highest price. The sum paid for it was \$10,010, it becoming the property of "Ed." Stokes, "the gentleman who happened to be present when James Fisk was assassinated," and who now keeps a splendid gin palace up-town, where, everything considered, this work will find a not unfitting abiding-place.

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COT'S "Springtime" brought the next highest price, \$9700, Mr. D. C. Lyall, of Brooklyn, becoming the owner. How much more than its real value this gentleman paid for the picture may be judged from the fact that Mr. Solomon Loeb, of the banking house of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., wishing to gratify his wife's fancy for it, telegraphed just before the sale to an expert dealer in Paris to learn what would be a fair price to pay, and received the answer: "\$2500 at the outside; it is not esteemed a work of the highest artistic merit." Mr. Loeb, through his representative, nevertheless,

liberally bid as high as \$7000 for it, and there he wisely stopped, laying out his money to much better advantage on Becker's "Charles V. and Fugger, the Banker of Augsburg," for which he paid \$3900—the subject, perhaps, appealing especially to his fancy; Andreas Achenbach's "Storm Clearing Off and Swollen Torrent," \$2950; Makart's "Ancient Egyptian Girl with Idol," \$600; E. Frère's "The Noonday Repast," \$1025, and Kraus's "Peasant Woman of Northern Prussia," \$310.

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BONNAT'S "Fellah Woman with Sleeping Child," after spirited competition, was sold for \$6000 to the owner's sister, Miss Catherine L. Wolfe, who also bought Compté's "Lady at her Toilette" for \$600, and Bakker-Korff's "Dutch Bric-à-brac Merchant" for \$500. Mr. William Ward paid \$5300 for "The Birth of Venus," Mr. D. T. Martin secured Daubigny's charming "Twilight on the Seine" for \$5000 and Tamburini's "Good News," for \$745. Piloty's "Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn" fell to Mr. Jacob H. Schiff for \$3500; Grutzner's "A Connoisseur," and Gérôme's "Veiled Circassian Lady," to Mr. Whitney for \$750 and \$3800 respectively. Jules Breton's "Peasant Girl of Normandy at a Roadside Fountain" was bought for \$3225 by Mr. Philip Van Volkenburgh. The same artist's uninteresting "Penitent of Brittany" was knocked down for \$1000 to Knoedler, who also bought Detaille's "Combat for the Colors" at \$2700. Mr. Charles J. Osborne paid \$2050 for Leloir's graceful "Zephyr," and Corot's "Ville d'Avray—Morning" fell to Mr. H. R. Bishop for exactly the same sum. Mr. Jordan L. Mott secured a bargain in Chavet's "In the Studio—Time of Watteau," at \$40. Makart's "Egyptian Water Carriers" was bought for \$3100 by Mr. Cassell. Falero's "Meteors" fell at \$2800 to Mr. José Maria Munoz, and Wahlberg's "An October Day at Waxholm, Sweden," at \$460, to Mr. J. B. Blossom.

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EX-GOVERNOR MORGAN bought Schreyer's splendid "Wallachian Teamster Entangled in the Marshes of the Danube" for \$5100. Schenck's "Sheep in Distress" fell at \$1600 to Mr. W. T. Evans. Mr. W. T. Walters adds to his splendid gallery in Baltimore A. Achenbach's "Squally Weather off Scheveningen," which was knocked down to him for \$1600; Georges Clairin's "A Moorish Sheik Entering his Seraglio," for which he paid only \$500, and Van Marcke's "Normandy White Cow," at \$3050. Van Marcke's "Normandy Bull" was bought by Mr. Aaron Healy for \$2200. Mrs. S. H. Greene carried off Escosura's "Murillo in the Picture Gallery of Philip IV.," at the good round price of \$2700. Vollon's admirable "Dresden China Punch Bowl and Dish of Fruit" fell to Mr. Erwin Davis for \$1050; Munkacsy's "The Widow's Mite," to Mr. Peters for \$2900; Merle's "Washerwoman of Entretat," to Mr. Byers for \$1800; O. Achenbach's "Gennezano, near Rome," for \$1750 to Mr. G. G. Haven. Gustave Doré's "Don Quixote and Sancho" brought \$950; Meyer von Bremen's "Weary Gleaner," \$1600; Brion's "A Village Wedding Present in Alsace," \$1750; and Riefstahl's "Procession of Tyrolean Capuchin Monks," \$3600.

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A DEALER has, of course, a perfect right to travel where he pleases to sell his goods. But Americans should be cautious about buying from itinerant foreigners. I am much afraid that the success which has attended a recent venture of this kind will encourage just such a trade as until recently—hard times have interfered with it—has been carried on in England, where London dealers from Wardour Street would take a run up to Manchester, Bradford, or Liverpool, spread out their doubtful treasures before the uncritical eyes of the rich merchants of those cities who desired to rank as persons of taste, and come back laden with spoil. This kind of business has been attempted in this country with pictures; but there is not much interest here in English paintings, even of the best, and the rubbish brought over by these trading excursionists naturally enough was not wanted. With bric-à-brac, however, the prospects of success are better. The profits are larger and the chances of detection in fraud are a good deal smaller. It may be this warning is unnecessary. Perhaps the hard times in England will mend by next season, and the old hunting grounds of the provincial towns there may continue to yield abundant game. If not, let us prepare for invasion. MONTEZUMA.

My Note Book.



UT West and in provincial towns in the East and South it is common enough to find for sale fraudulent imitations of works by popular American painters, duly signed, but with a slight difference of spelling in the names. It is something new, however, for such pictures to be offered openly at auction in New York City, with the artist's name correctly spelled and carefully imitated. This was actually done recently to the detriment of Mr. F. H. De Haas. Two forgeries of works by him were hung in the auction rooms of Barker & Co., Liberty Street. One was sold for \$320, about half the studio price of an original example of about the same size; the other, Mr. De Haas writes to The Herald, was "immediately taken down and dropped from the catalogue" when the auctioneers were informed of the fraud. The artist says that "the auctioneers were not to blame for the swindle, for they made the painter of the fraudulent picture return to